

THE REFERRAL SOURCES OF CHILDREN TO THE JUVENILE COURT 2000

Anyone perceiving a need for the court to intervene in a child's affairs can refer that child to the juvenile court. Frequently, the referral source is closely related to the reason for referral. For example schools refer truants and law enforcement officers refer children who have committed illegal acts.

The table on page 33 lists each referral source and its corresponding percentage of referrals. As can be seen by this table, in 2000, law enforcement remained the most often cited referral source for juveniles to the courts (50.4%), while parents continued to represent the second most often cited referral source (10.7%). The 2000 data shows schools (8.8%) as the third most often reported source, while court staff (8.5%) was the fourth and relatives (6.2%) was the fifth.

When looking at the six most frequently reported referral reasons associated with each referral source, the table on pages 34 - 36 reveals that, in 2000, law enforcement personnel continued to appear more likely to refer juveniles for traffic complaints (39%), while unruly behavior (22%) was the most often cited reason for referral by parents. With regard to schools, truancy remained the most cited referral reason (62%), while victims continued to refer more often for theft of property (40%).